



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Director of Public Works
Director of Planning
County Counsel

At its meeting held January 31, 2006, the Board took the following action:

70-A

Supervisor Antonovich made the following statement:

“Reports of illegal grading at several locations in County unincorporated areas suggest that current enforcement penalties are inadequate. These reports, both in terms of the number and the extent of violations, suggest that property owners are deliberately and flagrantly violating County codes and procedures.

“Staff of the Departments of Public Works and Regional Planning have discovered what they believe to be illegal grading at 29041 Euclid Avenue Estates in Val Verde, 42505 Ranch Club Road in Lake Hughes, and in Fair Oaks Ranch in unincorporated Santa Clarita. In all three of these cases staff has observed substantial grading that appears to have occurred either without a grading permit or in excess of what is permitted under an approved permit. Staff believes that the property owners were fully aware of the County’s requirement to obtain a permit and only perform work authorized by that permit.

“The trend of asking for forgiveness rather than permission demonstrates the need for additional enforcement mechanisms. Potential solutions include increasing civil penalties, the seizing of construction equipment used for illegal grading, or enacting a so-called provision. Under this provision, a property owner who grades without permits is precluded from securing a grading permit from the County for a defined period of time (perhaps 6 months to a year for the first violation, or for several years if violations continue).”

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70-A (Continued)

Therefore, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, seconded by Supervisor Burke, unanimously carried, the Directors of Public Works and Planning, and County Counsel were directed to recommend necessary code amendments and policy changes to the County's land grading permit procedure for Board approval within 30 days which include the following:

1. Imposing the available administrative fines and penalties and issue the appropriate stop-work orders and notices of violation to three property owners in the unincorporated areas of Val Verde, Lake Hughes and Santa Clarita, which have substantial grading that appears to have occurred either without a grading permit or in excess of what is permitted under an approved permit;
2. Increasing civil penalties for violations of the County's grading ordinances and policies;
3. Requiring applicants to secure a conditional use permit for grading in amounts lower than the current threshold of 100,000 cubic yards;
4. Empowering law enforcement to seize construction equipment used in illegal grading operations;
5. Enacting a provision whereby a property owner who grades without permits is precluded from securing a grading permit for a defined period of time;
6. Determining administrative procedures for hearings and review of penalties for illegal grading; and
7. Investigating these and other measures implemented by other jurisdictions that have successfully prevented illegal grading.

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